

**Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Carlsbad Field Office
Carlsbad, New Mexico**

July 2009 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
NEPA Log Number DOI-BLM-NM-P020-2009-0532-EA

Finding of No Significant Impact and Decision Record

Finding of No Significant Impact

Impact identification and analysis of approving the project proposal and/or alternative(s) has been completed. Environmental analysis has been conducted based on available inventory and monitoring data files. An environmental assessment has been prepared and revised as necessary. The proposed action conforms with and is within the scope of the land use decisions described and analyzed in the 1997 Carlsbad Resource Area Resource Management Plan Amendment for Oil and Gas Resources (CRMPA). The Final Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) was approved by Record of Decision signed 10 October 1997. The Special Status Species RMPA, signed 2 May 2008 amends the Carlsbad RMPA in portions of Chaves, Eddy, Lea and Roosevelt Counties, New Mexico, with reference to Planning Areas as described in that document. Implementation of required stipulations and/or mitigating measures, will maintain impacts within those levels analyzed in the CRMPA.

Environmental impacts associated with the proposed action have been assessed. Based on the analysis provided in the attached Environmental Analysis (EA), I conclude the approved action is not a major federal action and will result in no significant impacts to the environment under the criteria in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1508.18 and 1508.27. It has been determined that the quality of the human environment will not be significantly impacted as a result of this decision. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement to further analyze possible impacts pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 is not required.

Decision:

Twenty-four parcels with a total of 5501 acres were nominated, of which the following three parcels were removed from consideration.

Parcel -044: Parcel -044 lies within an area identified as a Critical Karst area. A portion of parcel -044, (160 acres in the southeast 1/4 of Section 20, T.25S, R.25) lies within the Chosa Draw ACEC, which is closed to new leasing. The portion of the parcel which has been deferred lies in close proximity to the Chosa Draw ACEC. Recent surveys have resulted in the discovery of cave/karst features adjacent to the ACEC and BLM specialists are currently conducting additional surveys to determine the extent of the cave and karst resources within parcel -044. A portion of parcel -044 has been deferred pending survey results and a comprehensive analysis of the cave and karst resources and systems located within and adjacent to the parcel. Results of the survey and analysis will determine the relationship between the cave and karst resources and ground water recharge for the springs in the ACEC as well as whether these resources are direct sources of water flow into the Parks Ranch Cave system located within the ACEC.

Parcel -047: This parcel lies at the confluence of the Pecos and Delaware Rivers and lies within the Pecos River Corridor Special Management Area (SMA). Floodplain topography offers no drillable locations on this parcel. Therefore, this parcel was deleted.

Parcel -053: This parcel was deferred due to its location within the Secretary's Potash Area.

Therefore, based upon the analysis, it is my decision to recommend that the New Mexico State Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offer for oil and gas leasing twenty-one parcels of federal minerals covering 3,640 acres administered by the Carlsbad Field Office (CFO) (Alternative C – Preferred Action). Standard terms and conditions as well and the following special stipulations would apply.

All remaining twenty-one parcels contain a special Cultural Resources Lease Notice stating that all development activities proposed under the authority of these leases are subject to compliances with Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13007.

The remaining parcels are to be leased with additional stipulations as shown in Appendix 1 of the EA and include the following:

NM- L N-11	Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-LN-2	Protection of the Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-S-1	Standard Potash Stipulation
SENM-S-17	Slopes or Fragile Soils
SENM-S-18	Streams, Rivers, and Floodplains
SENM-S-19	Playas and Alkali Lakes
SENM-S-20	Springs, Seeps and Tanks
SENM-S-22	Lesser Prairie-Chicken Timing Stipulation
SENM-S-23	Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-S-25	Visual Resource Management
SENM-S-39	Plan of Development Stipulation

No additional mitigation measures are necessary.

Rationale:

The parcels described in Appendix 1 of the EA were reviewed by an interdisciplinary group of specialists at the CFO. The purpose of the review was to determine if the parcels were in areas open to oil and gas leasing; if leasing was in conformance with the existing RMP; if new information had been developed since the RMP which might affect leasing suitability; to ensure that appropriate lease stipulations were attached to each lease parcel; and to verify that appropriate consultations had been conducted.

Approval of this Preferred Alternative will allow the BLM to lease these parcels for oil and gas on lands leased under the Leasing Law of 1920 as amended and the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987. The attached leasing stipulations will minimize environmental concerns on a lease-wide level. While potential site-specific lease analysis for surface disturbing activities was analyzed in the EA, this does not preclude CFO from conducting site-specific surface moves or adjustments on the ground mainly due to environmental conditions at any given location. The determining factors weighed by the BLM in reaching a finding of no significant impact are provided below:

- There are no major issues involved.
- There are no unique characteristics within the project area to be affected (e.g., park lands, wetlands, prime farm lands).
- There are no adverse impacts to endangered or threatened plant or animal species or their habitats.
- The project and its potential effects on the quality of the human environment are neither controversial nor do they involve unique or unknown results.
- The proposal is in conformance with all Federal, State, and local planning and laws, imposed for the protection of the environment.

Administrative Review and Appeal:

This protest process for this Decision Record has been instituted to reconcile differences between oil and gas lease sale and NEPA regulations; and improve the opportunities for public input into agency decisions. This Decision Record for the Environmental Assessment must be protested under 43 CFR 3120.1-3. Protests must be received within 30 days of the signed decision record. You may file a protest by mail, in hardcopy form or by telefax. You may not file a protest sent to a fax number other than the fax number identified below. Any protests filed by electronic mail will be dismissed. A protest filed by fax must be sent to (505) 438-7458 or by mail to: BLM New Mexico, 1474 Rodeo Road, PO Box 27115, Santa Fe, NM 87502 Attn: Minerals-Protests.

A protest must state the interest of the protesting party in the matter. The protest must also include any statement of reasons to support the protest. We will dismiss a late-filed protest or a protest filed without a statement of reasons.

If the party signing a protest is doing so on behalf of an association, partnership or corporations, the signing party must reveal the relationship between them. Before including your phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, you should be aware that your entire protest – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Approved by:

/s/ Jim Stovall
 Jim Stovall
 Field Manager
 Carlsbad Field Office

Date: May 29, 2009

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CARLSBAD FIELD OFFICE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
JULY 2009 COMPETITIVE OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE
DOI-BLM-NM-P020-2009-0532-EA**

1.0 Introduction

It is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as derived from various laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet national, regional, and local needs.

The BLM New Mexico State Office (NMSO) conducts a quarterly competitive lease sale to sell available oil and gas lease parcels in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas. A Notice of Competitive Lease Sale, which lists lease parcels to be offered at the auction, is published by the BLM State Office at least 45 days before the auction is held. The decision as to which public lands and minerals are open for leasing and what leasing stipulations may be necessary, based on information available at the time, is made during the land use planning process. Surface management of non-BLM administered lands overlaying federal minerals is determined by BLM in consultation with the appropriate surface management agency or the private surface owner.

In the process of preparing a lease sale the BLM State Office sends a draft parcel list to each field office where the parcels are located. Field Office staff then review the legal descriptions of the parcels to determine if they are in areas open to leasing; if appropriate stipulations have been included; if new information has become available which might change any analysis conducted during the planning process; if appropriate consultations have been conducted, and if there are special resource conditions of which potential bidders should be made aware.

Once the draft parcel review is completed and returned to the State Office, a list of available lease parcels and stipulations is made available to the public through a Notice of Competitive Lease Sale (NCLS). Lease stipulations applicable to each parcel are specified in the Sale Notice. On rare occasions, additional information obtained after the publication of the NCLS, may result in withdrawal of certain parcels prior to the day of the lease sale.

The following Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the Carlsbad Field Office (CFO) review of the twenty-four parcels offered in the July 2009 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale that are under the administration of the CFO. It serves to verify conformance with the approved land use plan and provides the rationale for deferring or dropping parcels from a lease sale as well as providing rationale for attaching additional lease stipulations to specific parcels.

1.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose of offering parcels for competitive oil and gas leasing is to allow private individuals or companies to explore for and develop oil and gas resources for sale on public markets. The sale of oil and gas leases is needed to meet the growing energy needs of the United States public. New Mexico is a major source of natural gas for heating and electrical energy production in the lower 48 states, especially California. Continued leasing is necessary to maintain options for production as oil and gas companies seek new areas for production or attempt to develop previously inaccessible or uneconomical reserves.

1.2 Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plans

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.28 and 1502.21, this EA tiers to and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the September 1986 Carlsbad Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS), the January 1997 Carlsbad Proposed Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMPA/FEIS) for the management of oil and gas resources, and the November 2007 Pecos District Special Status Species PRMPA/FEIS.

The Final RMP and RMPAs were approved by the Record of Decision (ROD) signed 30 September 1988, 10 October 1997 and 2 May 2008, respectively. The 1997 RMPA designated 3.9 million acres of federal minerals open for continued oil and gas development and leasing under Standard Terms and Conditions. The RMPA described specific stipulations that would be attached to new leases offered in certain areas. All of the parcels to be offered in the July 2009 sale are within areas open to oil and gas leasing.

Site specific analysis as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (Public Law 91-90, 42 USC 4321 et seq.) was conducted by CFO resource specialists who relied on personal knowledge of the areas involved or reviewed existing databases and file information to determine if appropriate stipulations had been attached to specific parcels.

At the time of this review, it is not known whether a parcel will be sold, a lease issued or when, where or if future well sites or roads might be proposed. Detailed site specific analysis of individual wells or roads would occur when an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) is submitted.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 categorically excludes certain oil and gas development activities from further NEPA analysis. However, excluded projects must conform with the applicable RMP including any restrictions to development presented in the Plan.

The proposed project is not in conflict with any local, county, or state plans.

The critical elements subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation, or executive order listed below are either not present or not affected by the proposed action or alternative:

Hazardous/Solid Wastes
Prime/Unique Farmlands
Wild & Scenic Rivers
Wilderness

1.3 Federal, State or Local Permits, Licenses or Other Consultation Requirements

Purchasers of oil and gas leases are required to obey all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations including obtaining all necessary permits required should lease development occur.

In preparation for the 1997 RMPA, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) concurred with CFO biologists with a determination of no effect or not likely to adversely affect T&E species. USFWS response is found in Appendix 4 of the ROD for the RMPA, dated 30 April 1997. No further consultation with the USFWS is needed at this stage for any of the proposed parcels.

In April 2008, the BLM Pecos District Special Status Species RMPA amended the Carlsbad RMP in portions of the CFO with references to the Planning Area, as described in that document, to ensure continued habitat protection of two special status species, the lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) (LPC) and the sand dune lizard (*Sceloporus arenicolus*) (SDL). This action is in compliance with threatened and endangered species management outlined in the September 2006 (Cons. #22420-2007-TA-0033) Biological Assessments and in accordance with the requirements of the Federal

Land Policy and Management Act (FLMPA) of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

Federal regulations and policies require the BLM to make its public land and resources available based on the principle of multiple-use. At the same time, it is BLM policy to conserve special status species and their habitats, and ensure that actions authorized by the BLM do not contribute to the need for the species to become listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS.

Compliance with Section 106 responsibilities of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) are adhered to by following the BLM – New Mexico SHPO protocol agreement, which is authorized by the National Programmatic Agreement between the *BLM*, the *Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, and the *National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers*, and other applicable BLM handbooks. When draft parcel locations are received by the CFO, cultural resource staff review the locations to determine if any are within known areas of concern.

Native American consultation is conducted by certified mail regarding each lease sale activity. If Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) or heritage related issues are identified, such parcels are withheld from the sale while letters requesting information, comments, or concerns are sent to the Native American representative. If the same draft parcels appear in a future sale, a second request for information is sent to the same recipients and the parcels will be held back again. If no response to the second letter is received, the parcels are allowed to be offered in the next sale. If responses are received, BLM cultural resources staff will discuss the information or issues of concern with the Native American representative to determine if all or only portions of a parcel need to be withdrawn from the sale or if special stipulations need to be attached as lease stipulations. Native American consultation letters for the July 2009 Lease Sale were sent out on 9 April 2009. To date, no responses from Tribes have been received.

In Section 1835 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (43 U.S.C. 15801), Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to review current policies and practices with respect to management of Federal subsurface oil and gas development activities and their effects on the privately-owned surface. The Split Estate Report, submitted in December 2006, documents the findings resulting from consultation on the split estate issue with affected private surface owners, the oil and gas industry, and other interested parties.

In 2007, the Legislature of the State of New Mexico passed the Surface Owners Protection Act. This Act requires operators to provide the surface owner at least 5 business days notice prior to initial entry upon the land for activities that do not disturb the surface; and provide at least 30 days notice prior to conducting actual oil and gas operations. At the New Mexico Federal Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale conducted on October 17, 2007, the BLM announced the implementation of this policy. Included in this policy is the implementation of a Notice to Lessees (NTL), a requirement of lessees and operators of onshore Federal oil and gas leases within the State of New Mexico to provide the BLM with the names and addresses of the surface owner(s) of those lands where the Federal Government is not the surface owner, not including lands where another Federal agency manages the surface.

The New Mexico State BLM office will then contact the surface owners and notify them of the expression of interest and the date the oil and gas rights will be offered for competitive bidding. The BLM will provide the surface owners with its internet web address so they may obtain additional information related to the oil and gas leasing process, the imposition of any special stipulations on that lease parcel, Federal and State regulations, and Best Management Practices. The surface owner(s) may elect to protest the leasing of the minerals underlying their surface. If the BLM receives a protest, the parcel will remain on the lease sale; however, the BLM will resolve any protest prior to issuing an oil and gas lease for that parcel. If the protest is upheld, the BLM will return the payments received from the

successful bidder for that parcel. After the lease sale has occurred, the BLM will post the results on its website. The surface owner may access the BLM's website to learn of the results of the lease sale.

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Alternative A – No Action

The BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) states that for EAs on externally initiated proposed actions, the No Action Alternative generally means that the proposed action would not take place. In the case of a lease sale, this would mean that an expression of interest to lease (parcel nomination) would be denied or rejected.

The No Action alternative would withdraw all twenty-four lease parcels from the July 2009 lease sale. The parcels would remain available for inclusion in future lease sales. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development would continue on surrounding federal, private and state leases.

No mitigation measures would be required as no new oil and gas development would occur on the un-leased lands. No rental or royalty payments would be made to the federal government.

Air Resources – Air Quality and Climate

If the BLM does not lease these Federal minerals, it could be assumed that demand would not decrease for oil and gas. Demand would likely be addressed through production elsewhere or imports. Due to less stringent environmental regulations in some areas outside of the U.S., it is possible that there would be increased emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC), air borne dust, and Green House Gases (GHG) during exploration and production operations. In addition, it is anticipated that there would be additional emissions of GHGs during transportation of these commodities to US ports.

Socio-economics

It is an assumption that the No Action Alternative (no lease option) may result in a slight reduction in domestic production of oil and gas. This would likely result in reduced Federal and State royalty income, and the potential for Federal lands to be drained by wells on adjacent private or state lands. Consumption of oil and gas developed from the proposed lease parcels is expected to produce GHGs. Consumption is driven by a variety of complex interacting factors including energy costs, energy efficiency, availability of other energy sources, economics, demography, and weather or climate. If the BLM were to forego its leasing decisions and potential development of those minerals, the assumption is that the public's demand for the resource would not be expected to change. Instead, the resource foregone would be replaced by other sources that may include a combination of imports, fuel switching, and other domestic production. This displacement of supply would offset any reductions in emissions achieved by not leasing the subject tracts.

2.2 Alternative B – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would be a recommendation to the State Director that BLM offer for oil and gas leasing twenty-four parcels of federal minerals covering 5,501 acres administered by the CFO. Standard terms and conditions as well and special stipulations listed in the RMPAs would apply. The number of parcels and acres are the same in both Alternatives A and B.

All original twenty-four parcels, totaling 5,501 acres, contain a special Cultural Resources Lease Notice stating that all development activities proposed under the authority of these leases are subject to compliances with Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13007.

Once sold, the lease purchaser has the right to use so much of the leased lands as is reasonably necessary to explore and drill for all of the oil and gas within the lease boundaries, subject to the stipulations attached to the lease (43 CFR 3101). Oil and gas leases are issued for a 10-year period and continue for as long thereafter as oil or gas is produced in paying quantities. If a lease holder fails to produce oil and gas, does not make annual rental payments, does not comply with the terms and conditions of the lease, or relinquishes the lease; ownership of the minerals leased revert back to the federal government and the lease can be resold.

Drilling of wells on a lease is not permitted until the lease owner or operator meets the site specific requirements specified in 43 CFR 3162.

The Proposed Action includes parcels that were recommended for deferment or deletion. These parcels include:

Parcel -044: A portion of parcel -044, (160 acres in the southeast 1/4 of Section 20, T.25S, R.25) lies within the Chosa Draw Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), which is closed to new leasing.

2.3 Alternative C – Preferred Action

Alternative C would be a recommendation to the State Director that BLM offer for oil and gas leasing twenty-one parcels of federal minerals covering 3,640 acres administered by the CFO. Standard terms and conditions as well and special stipulations listed in the RMPAs would apply. The Preferred Action conforms to the RMPA decisions and resource issues.

The Preferred Action does not include the following parcels which were deferred or deleted below:

Parcel -044: Parcel -044 lies within an area identified as a Critical Karst area. A portion of parcel -044, (160 acres in the southeast 1/4 of Section 20, T.25S, R.25) lies within the Chosa Draw ACEC, which is closed to new leasing. The remainder of the parcel which has been deferred lies in close proximity to the Chosa Draw ACEC. Recent surveys have resulted in the discovery of cave/karst features adjacent to the ACEC and BLM specialists are currently conducting additional surveys to determine the extent of the cave and karst resources within parcel -044. A portion of parcel -044 has been deferred pending survey results and a comprehensive analysis of the cave and karst resources and systems located within and adjacent to the parcel. Results of the survey and analysis will determine the relationship between the cave and karst resources and ground water recharge for the springs in the ACEC as well as whether these resources are direct sources of water flow into the Parks Ranch Cave system located within the ACEC.

Parcel -047: This parcel lies at the confluence of the Pecos and Delaware Rivers and lies within the Pecos River Corridor Special Management Area (SMA). Floodplain topography offers no drillable locations on this parcel. Therefore, this parcel was deleted.

Parcel -053: This parcel was deferred due to its location within the Secretary's Potash Area.

All twenty-one parcels contain a special Cultural Resources Lease Notice stating that all development activities proposed under the authority of these leases are subject to compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13007. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations listed in the RMP would apply.

3.0 Description of Affected Environment

This section describes the environment that would be affected by implementation of **Alternative C – Preferred Action** in Section 2.3 above. Aspects of the affected environment described in this section focus on the relevant major resources or issues. Certain critical environmental components require analysis under BLM policy. Only those aspects of the affected environment that are potentially impacted are described in detail in this chapter.

The proposed project area is located within Eddy and Lea Counties primarily on lands administered by the BLM.

All of the private surfaces encumbered by this project have mineral estates that are federally owned and administered by the BLM. Use of public land consists mainly of recreation, agriculture, potash mining, and oil and gas exploration and production.

Certain critical environmental components require analysis under BLM policy. Those critical environmental components are analyzed in Chapter 4 of this document. Unless otherwise noted individually, only those parcels offered for lease are described with their accompanying stipulations.

New information about GHGs and their effects on national and global climate conditions has emerged since the RMP and Amendments were prepared. On-going scientific research has identified the potential impacts of GHG emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), water vapor, and several trace gasses on global climate. Through complex interactions on a global scale, GHG emissions cause a net warming effect of the atmosphere, primarily by decreasing the amount of heat energy radiated by the earth back into space. Although GHG levels have varied for millennia (along with corresponding variations in climatic conditions), industrialization and burning of fossil carbon sources have caused GHG concentrations to increase measurably, and may contribute to overall climatic changes, typically referred to as global warming.

3.1 Air Resources

Air quality and climate are the components of air resources, which include applications, activities, and management of the air resource. Therefore, the BLM must consider and analyze the potential effects of BLM and BLM-authorized activities on air resources as part of the planning and decision making process.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the primary responsibility for regulating air quality, including seven nationally regulated ambient air pollutants. Regulation of air quality is also delegated to some states. Air quality is determined by atmospheric pollutants and chemistry, dispersion meteorology and terrain, and also includes applications of noise, smoke management, and visibility. Climate is the composite of generally prevailing weather conditions of a particular region throughout the year, averaged over a series of years.

3.1.1 Air Quality

The area of the proposed action is considered a Class II air quality area. A Class II area allows moderate amounts air quality degradation. The primary sources of air pollution are dust from blowing wind on disturbed or exposed soil and exhaust emissions from motorized equipment.

Air quality in the areas of the proposed lease tracts is generally good. None of the potential lease tracts are located in any of the areas designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as “non-attainment areas” for any listed pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act.

Greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄), and the potential effects of GHG

emissions on climate, are not regulated by the EPA under the Clean Air Act. However, climate has the potential to influence renewable and non-renewable resource management. The EPA's Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks found that in 2006, total US GHG emissions were over 6 billion metric tons and that total US GHG emissions have increased by 14.1% from 1990 to 2006. The report also noted that GHG emissions fell by 1.5% from 2005 to 2006. This decrease was, in part, attributed to the increased use of natural gas and other alternatives to burning coal in electric power generation.

The levels of these GHGs are expected to continue increasing. The rate of increase is expected to slow as greater awareness of the potential environmental and economic costs associated with increased levels of GHG's result in behavioral and industrial adaptations.

3.1.2 Climate

Global mean surface temperatures have increased nearly 1.0°C (1.8°F) from 1890 to 2006 (Goddard Institute for Space Studies, 2007). However, observations and predictive models indicate that average temperature changes are likely to be greater in the Northern Hemisphere. Without additional meteorological monitoring systems, it is difficult to determine the spatial and temporal variability and change of climatic conditions, but increasing concentrations of GHGs are likely to accelerate the rate of climate change.

In 2001, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicted that by the year 2100, global average surface temperatures would increase 1.4 to 5.8°C (2.5 to 10.4°F) above 1990 levels. The National Academy of Sciences (2006) supports these predictions, but has acknowledged that there are uncertainties regarding how climate change may affect different regions. Computer model predictions indicate that increases in temperature will not be equally distributed, but are likely to be accentuated at higher latitudes. Warming during the winter months is expected to be greater than during the summer, and increases in daily minimum temperatures is more likely than increases in daily maximum temperatures. It is not, however, possible to predict with any certainty regional or site specific effects on climate relative to the proposed July 2009 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale parcels and subsequent actions.

However, potential impacts to natural resources and plant and animal species due to climate change are likely to be varied, including those in the southwestern United States. For example, if global climate change results in a warmer and drier climate, increased particulate matter impacts could occur due to increased windblown dust from drier and less stable soils. Cool season plant species' spatial ranges are predicted to move north and to higher elevations, and extinction of endemic threatened/endangered plants may be accelerated. Due to loss of habitat or competition from other species whose ranges may shift northward, the population of some animal species may be reduced or increased. Less snow at lower elevations would likely impact the timing and quantity of snowmelt, which, in turn, could impact water resources and species dependant on historic water conditions. Forests at higher elevations in New Mexico, for example, have been exposed to warmer and drier conditions over a ten year period. Should the trend continue, the habitats and identified drought sensitive species in these forested areas and higher elevations may also be more affected by climate change.

Mean annual temperatures have risen across New Mexico and the southwestern U.S. since the early 20th century. When compared to baseline information, periods between 1991 and 2005 show temperature increases in over 95% of the geographical area of New Mexico (Enquist and Gori). Warming is greatest in the northwestern, central, and southwestern parts of the state.

3.2 Soils

Based on soil survey manuals, the Carlsbad Resource Management Area can be divided into four general soil types as stated in Soil Survey: Eddy Area, New Mexico. These are shallow, loamy, sandy, and gypsum.

The shallow type is primarily soils of the Ector and Upton series. Several other minor soil mapping units are found in this type. These soils are shallow to very shallow, well-drained, calcareous, stony and rocky loams over limestone and caliche. Topography ranges from nearly level ridgetops to steep side slopes to cliffs and escarpments. Permeability is moderate, water-holding capacity is very low to low, and runoff is rapid after the soils become saturated. They are subject to water erosion, but the stones and rock outcrops help to stabilize the soils on nearly level to gently sloping areas.

Loamy soils are mainly in the Reagan, Reeves, and Anthony series, while other minor soil mapping units also occur within this type. Generally these soils are deep, well-drained, moderately dark colored, calcareous, and loamy, occurring on gently undulating plains and in the broader valleys of the hills and mountains. Permeability is moderate, water-holding capacity is moderate to high, and runoff is likely after prolonged or heavy rains.

The sandy type has predominately soils from the Pyote, Kermit, Berino, Pajarito, and Wink series. Other soil mapping units make up a minor part of this type. Typically, these soils are deep, well-drained to excessively drained, non-calcareous to weakly calcareous sands. They are found on undulating plains and low hills in the “sand country” east of the Pecos River. Permeability is moderate to very rapid, water-holding capacity is low to moderate, and little runoff occurs.

Gypsum soils are primarily in the Cottonwood and Gypsum land series. These soils have a loamy surface layer, with gypsiferous materials starting at a depth of 1 to 10 inches. They are found on gently undulating uplands, with steep, broken gypsum outcrops occurring in places. Permeability varies from very low to moderate, water-holding capacity is very low to low, and runoff rapid to very rapid. Soil fertility and the rooting zone are limited by the underlying gypsiferous material.

All of the aforementioned soil types are susceptible to wind erosion and careful management is needed to maintain a cover of desirable forage plants and to control erosion. Revegetation is difficult once the native plant cover is lost, due to high temperatures and unpredictable rainfall.

Biological soil crusts can be found within the project area. These include cyanobacteria, squamulose and gelatinous lichen. These biological soil crusts, while abundant in some locations, are scattered throughout the project area.

Cyanobacteria are the most common in the project area. These soil crusts are important in binding loose soil particles together to stabilize the soil surface and reduce erosion. They also function in the nutrient cycle by fixing atmospheric nitrogen, contributing to soil organic matter, and maintaining soil moisture. In addition, they can act as living mulch that discourages the establishment of annual or invasive weeds.

Structurally, cyanobacteria form an uneven, rough carpet that reduces raindrop impact and slows surface runoff. Below the surface, lichen, rhizines, and cyanobacterial filaments act to bind the soil surface particles just below and at the surface. Horizontally, they occur in nutrient-poor areas between plant clumps. Because they lack a waxy epidermis, they tend to leak nutrients into the surrounding soil. Vascular plants such as grasses and forbs can then utilize these nutrients. Once disturbed, these crusts, particularly the lichens, take from 10 to 100 years to recover, based on the severity of the disturbance and the type of crust.

While they occur in the top 4 mm of the soil, this type of soil crust is important in binding loose soil particles together to stabilize the soil surface and reduce erosion. The cyanobacteria also function in the nutrient cycle by fixing atmospheric nitrogen, contributing to soil organic matter, and maintaining soil moisture. Cyanobacteria are mobile, and can often move up through disturbed sediments to reach light levels necessary for photosynthesis. Horizontally, they occur in nutrient-poor areas between plant

clumps. Because they lack a waxy epidermis, they tend to leak nutrients into the surrounding soil. Vascular plants such as grasses and forbs can then utilize these nutrients.

Lease Parcels -046, -071 are within fragile soil locations containing gypsiferous soils, active dunes or steep slopes.

3.3 Vegetation

In general, the project areas are a grassland site with warm season mid and short grass aspect. There is a fair scattering of shrubs and half-shrubs throughout the landscape, and in places shrubs have invaded to the point of dominating the vegetative component. Forb production fluctuates from season to season and year to year.

The majority of the shallow type is made up of the gravelly, shallow, very shallow, and limestone hills range sites. The potential plant community consists primarily of grasses such as black grama, sideoats grama, hairy grama, muhlys, dropseeds, and tridens. Cresotebush, mesquite, mariola, and catclaw mimosa also occur on the site. Yucca, sacahuista, mariola, and catclaw mimosa become more prevalent on north and east slopes. In deteriorated condition, this site will show an increase in woody plants and grasses such as threeawns, fluffgrass, and hairy tridens.

Range sites such as loamy, swale, bottomland, and draw make up most of the loamy type. The potential plant community consists of blue grama, black grama, sideoats grama, and tobosa. Fourwing saltbush, tarbush, and yucca are the principal shrubs. Forbs include croton, filaree, globemallow, and desert holly. Invasive species such as three-awns, burrograss, snakeweed, mesquite, creosote, and cholla cactus increase as ecological condition decreases.

The sandy type is dominated by deep sand, sand hills, and sandy range sites. The potential plant community consists of dropseeds (sand, spike, and mesa), bluestems, and black grama. Yucca, fourwing saltbush, and shinners oak are the principle shrub species. As deterioration occurs, plants such as threeawn grass and mesquite will increase and soil hummocking will occur.

Gypsum hills and gypsum flats are the range sites occurring in gypsum type. The potential plant community consists of gyp grama, gyp dropseed, coldenia, yucca, and ephedra. Black grama, blue grama, alkali sacaton, tobosa, and fourwing saltbush can be found in the loamy pockets included in the gypsum areas. Tarbush, broom snakeweed, and mesquite invade in disturbed areas.

3.4 Visual Resources

The proposed lease parcels fall under one of the four categories of Visual Resource Management Objectives. Each of the different class objectives are described below with the appropriate lease parcels noted.

Class I Objective: The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.

The following leases parcels are within Class I Objectives: None

Class II Objective: The objective to this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

The following leases parcels are within Class II Objectives: None.

Class III Objective: The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

The following lease parcels are within Class III Objectives: None.

Class IV Objective: The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

All lease parcels fall within Class IV Objectives.

3.5 Recreation

The proposed lease parcels are all within dispersed recreation areas subject to public use. Dispersed recreation areas are areas that are used by recreationists as they desire. The Carlsbad Field Office is flanked on the west by the Guadalupe Mountains. The Pecos River Valley cuts the resource area roughly in half. The river is favored by the public for fishing, camping, hunting, and other outdoor recreation activities. The sand dunes east of Carlsbad include two Off-Highway Vehicle sites. Every area has a different setting and may be used in a different way. Activities from hunting and four-wheeling to hiking and bird watching occur in dispersed recreation areas.

3.6 Wildlife

Mammals known to occur throughout the field office include, but are not limited to various species of bats, desert cottontail, black-tailed jackrabbit, spotted ground squirrel, rock squirrel, pocket gopher, porcupine, coyote, gray fox, bobcat, raccoon, striped skunk, spotted skunk, mule deer, pronghorn, wood rat, and various other small rodents. Upland game bird species may include, but are not limited to, scaled quail, bobwhite quail, mourning dove, and lesser prairie-chicken. Several raptors inhabit the area, including but not limited to, Harris Hawk, Swainson's hawk, and the western burrowing owl.

Migratory Birds

Executive order #13186 titled "Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds" signed 1/10/01 requires that the BLM evaluate the effects of federal actions on migratory birds. A migratory bird inventory has not been completed for this area. Common migratory birds which may use the area as habitat include various species of song birds, owls, ravens, hawks, finches, doves, thrashers, and meadow larks.

Water is a limiting factor for many animal species in the desert. There are numerous wildlife water developments scattered throughout the field office that have been installed for water distribution and availability for wildlife during dry times.

For the July 2009 Lease Sale, there are no documented wildlife water units on any offered parcels.

3.7 Special Status Species

Special status species of concern in this area include the lesser prairie-chicken and sand dune lizard which are considered “candidate species” for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) by the USFWS.

Lesser Prairie-Chicken

The leases listed in Section 4.7 with the lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) stipulations attached are located in lesser prairie-chicken habitat based on the presence of a sand/shinnery oak habitat type which generally consists of a combination of shinnery oak, sand and giant dropseed, bluestem grasses, sand sage, a variety of forbs including spectacle pod and annual buckwheat, and in some cases, mesquite.

In 1987, there were 35 documented active booming grounds known to exist south of 33°. During the 2008 LPC survey season, the Carlsbad Field Office (CFO) wildlife staff located 9 active booming grounds and 12 other sightings not associated with an active lek. During surveys performed in 2009, lesser prairie-chickens were observed south of 33°. However, there were no observances of lesser prairie-chickens or leks within any nominated parcels or within 10 miles of nominated parcels. Due to the existing situation, the lesser prairie-chicken is currently a candidate for federal listing, and potentially may become extirpated from Eddy and southern Lea counties.

In June 1998, USFWS issued a statement regarding their status review of the lesser prairie-chicken. It stated, “Protection of the lesser prairie-chicken under the ESA is warranted but precluded which means that other species in greater need of protection must take priority in the listing process”. Given the current Federal Candidate status of this species, the Bureau of Land Management is mandated to carry out management, consistent with the principles of multiple use, for the conservation of candidate species and their habitats and shall ensure that actions authorized, funded, or carried out do not contribute to the need to list any of these species as Threatened or Endangered (Bureau Manual 6840.06).

Although lesser prairie-chickens have been sighted in or nearby the specific parcels, it is not known if there are active booming grounds associated within these areas. Only after site-specific, current year surveys will it be known if the area does contain prairie-chickens. However, these parcels are a part of a larger contiguous area containing the characteristics of LPC habitat, including the presence of shinnery oak and tall-stemmed bunch grasses with little or no surface disturbance. Similar areas throughout the CFO resource area were identified in the Pecos District Special Status Species RMPA in 2008 as habitat building blocks, or Habitat Evaluation Areas, for lesser prairie-chicken habitat. It is vitally important that the CFO take every precaution to ensure that an active booming ground is protected. Those parcels associated with Habitat Evaluation Areas for LPC habitat will be deferred until decisions can be made for the management of these areas.

Parcels -046,-054, -056, -057, -058, -059, -060, -061, -062, -063, -064, -065, -066, -067, -068, -069, -071, -128, -129 contain potential LPC habitat.

Sand Dune Lizard

The sand dune lizard (SDL) is a species with a limited geographic range including parts of Chaves, Eddy, Lea and Roosevelt Counties of southeastern New Mexico and four counties in Texas. The sand dune lizard is habitat-specific species, found exclusively in association with shinnery oak dune complexes. The lizard prefers large deep sand blowouts within the shinnery oak habitat. The CFO wildlife staff has conducted sand dune lizard surveys since 2004 in an effort to locate occupied and suitable habitat. In 2004 there were 29 known locations of the lizard within the CFO. To date there are over five hundred documented locations for the sand dune lizard within the CFO.

The Center for Biological Diversity and Chihuahuan Desert Conservation Alliance petitioned the USFWS

on May 28, 2002 to list the sand dune lizard as an endangered species under the ESA. In May 2005, the USFWS issued a statement regarding their status review of the sand dune lizard. It stated, "Protection of the sand dune lizard under the ESA is warranted but precluded, which means that other species in greater need of protection must take priority in the listing process". Given the current Federal Candidate status of this species, the BLM is mandated to carry out management, consistent with the principles of multiple use, for the conservation of candidate species and their habitats and shall ensure that actions authorized, funded, or carried out do not contribute to the need to list any of these species as Threatened or Endangered (Bureau Manual 6840.06). The Pecos District Special Status Species Resource Management Plan Amendment, approved in 2008, directs CFO to avoid the disturbance of occupied and adjacent suitable SDL sand dune complexes. Means to accomplish this goal is to not lease parcels containing the habitat or apply stipulations that require a 200 meter avoidance buffer around dunes and/or No Surface Occupancy to the specified areas. Another option would be to defer new leasing until the completion of a listing decision by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Parcels -058, -071 lie within potential (suitable or occupied) SDL habitat.

3.8 Range

The lease sale covers all or parts of 11 grazing allotments. Ten of these are on the east side of the Pecos River, while the remaining allotment is west of the Pecos. The majority of these allotments are run as a year long, cow-calf operation. Most of the grazing permittees follow some type of deferred use rotation system, in which one or more pastures within the allotment receive some growing rest. Range improvement projects such as windmills, water delivery systems (pipelines, storage tanks, and water troughs), earthen reservoirs, fences, and brush control projects are located within the project area. In general, an average rating of the range land within this area is six acres/AUM (Animal Unit Months). In order to support one cow, for one year, about 72 acres is needed. This equals about nine cows per section.

3.9 Watershed/Water Resources/Ground Water/Drinking Water Quality

Surface water within the project area is affected by geology, precipitation, and water erosion. Factors that currently affect surface water resources include livestock grazing management, oil and gas development, recreational use, and brush control treatments. Surface water is located in perennial and ephemeral springs, ephemeral playas, and stock tanks. The Pecos River, and its tributaries such as Black River and Delaware River, are water quality impaired streams presently found within the CFO as per the 2006-2008 State of New Mexico Integrated Clean Water Act 303(d) and 305(b) Report. The impaired designated uses are livestock watering, irrigation, and warm water fishery. Listed probable causes of impairment include natural sources (Malaga salt dome), flow regulation or modification, and bank/shoreline modification or destabilization.

Groundwater within the CFO is affected by geology and precipitation. Factors that currently affect groundwater resources include livestock grazing management, oil and gas development, groundwater pumping, and possible impacts from brush control treatments. Groundwater within the CFO can be obtained from groundwater aquifers located within the Rustler, Castile, Tansill, Yates, Seven Rivers, Queen, Grayburg, Artesia, Ogallala, Chinle Formation, Capitan and San Andres Limestones, Glorieta and Santa Rosa Sandstones, and the Dockum Group. Most of the groundwater occurs as unconfined aquifers. Groundwater occurs as confined aquifers in the San Andres Formation under artesian conditions. The depth to shallow unconfined groundwater varies from 1 foot to depths of 400 feet throughout the CFO (New Mexico Office of the State Engineer data). The depth to confined groundwater can occur at depths greater than 400 feet. Most of the groundwater is used for agricultural, industrial, rural, domestic, and livestock purposes.

There are numerous sinks and playas within one or more of the proposed lease boundaries that may hold water after infrequent heavy rains. Numerous intermittent drainages also cut across the project area.

3.10 Wetlands, Riparian Areas and Floodplains

Portions of the offered lease parcels are located in the 100-year floodplain of the Pecos River. Most often ephemeral in desert watersheds, floodplains range in width from less than one-half mile to more than one mile in some areas. On desert watersheds including the CFO, floodplains may appear to be little more than gentle draws. However, they can quickly become dangerous torrents in periods of monsoonal rainstorms. Regardless, they are important water sources for animals and plants of the Chihuahuan Desert. For administrative purposes, the 100-year floodplain serves as the basis for floodplain management on public lands. These are in general relatively narrow areas along natural drainage ways that carry large quantities of runoff following periods of high precipitation.

The following lease parcels have mapped floodplains within their lease parcel boundaries or within 200 meters of their parcel boundaries: None.

Playas are ephemeral, round hollows in the ground located mainly on the Southern High Plains of the United States. The temporal nature of playas allow filling with water only after rainstorms when freshwater collects in the round depressions of the otherwise flat landscape of West Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas. There are also many saltwater-filled playas in the CFO, known as alkali lakes. These are fed by water from underlying aquifers, which brings salt with it as it percolates up through the soil. As the water evaporates, the salt is left behind in the increasingly salty playas. They are important water sources for animals and plants of the Chihuahuan Desert.

The following lease parcels have playas within their lease parcel boundaries or are within 200 meters of their parcel boundaries: -072.

Springs and seeps are fed by groundwater from shallow aquifers. Their emergence is a function of hydrogeological, geological and topographical conditions and interrelation among them. Earthen tanks are drainage catchments normally used for livestock watering, however they also offer isolated and limited water for plants, wildlife as well as domestic and commercial purposes in the Chihuahuan Desert.

Lease parcel -128 includes an earthen tank or spring within 200 meters of the lease parcel boundary.

Some lease parcels may have unidentified windmills for livestock watering purposes within 200 meters of the lease parcel boundary.

3.11 Cultural Resources

The project area identified in this environmental document is located in southeastern New Mexico. Geographically the area is bounded on the west by the eastern flanks of the Guadalupe Mountains, east by the Llano Estacado or 'Staked Plain' and is bisected by the Southern Pecos River Valley. Three archaeological regions (The Guadalupe Mountain, Pecos Valley, and Plains archaeological regions) characterize the cultural resources located within the project area. Lease Parcel -072 is located in the Plains archaeological region. All other parcels are located in the Pecos Valley archaeological region. Archaeological sites in Southeastern New Mexico are the reflection of human adaptations to changing environmental conditions. As the environmental conditions changed, the distribution and availability of food (plant and animal) also changed. Archaeological sites often reflect these adaptations in their technology (artifact assemblages), geographical location, and the duration of occupation. Rough chronological sequences have been created that reflect these cultural adaptations allowing archaeologists to place a site into a cultural tradition or period. Paleoindian (ca. 12,000-8,000 B.C.), Archaic (ca. 8000 B.C. -A.D. 950), Formative (ca. A.D. 600-1540) Protohistoric (ca. A.D. 1400-1821), and Historic (ca. A.D. 1822 to early 20th century). Sites representing any or all of these periods are known to occur within these archaeological regions (Sebastian & Larralde 1989 and Hogan 2006).

Portions of the proposed lease sale (Parcels -046, -054, -056, -057, -058) fall within the area covered by the Permian Basin Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The Permian Basin MOA is an optional method of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for energy related projects in a 28 quadrangle area of the Carlsbad Field Office. The MOA is a form of off-site mitigation which allows industry to design projects to avoid known NRHP eligible cultural resources and to contribute to a mitigation fund in lieu of paying for additional archaeological inventory in this area that has received adequate previous survey. Funds received from the Permian Basin MOA will be utilized to conduct archaeological research and outreach in Southeastern New Mexico. Research will include archaeological excavation of significant sites, predictive modeling, targeted research activities, as well as professional and public presentations on the results of the investigations.

Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources preserved in marine and terrestrial sediments may be found in rocks formed during the late Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic Ages. Detailed data concerning Pennsylvanian and Permian Age fossils is available because of the intense oil and gas exploration in southeastern New Mexico where such data is necessary for stratigraphic correlation (age dating) of producing formations. Such information is lacking in non-producing areas.

Paleontological remains found in isolated Cenozoic terrestrial sediments are perhaps the best known vertebrate fossils found in the Pecos District. These Pleistocene-Holocene fossils are usually associated with lake deposits, caves, or early man's hunting sites. The extent of known paleontological resources in the area is minimal when compared to the amount of sedimentary rocks which may contain fossil remains.

There are no parcels located in the vicinity of known paleontological resources.

3.12 Potash Resources

The potash enclave or measured ore are those potash resources for which tonnage is computed from dimensions revealed in workings and drill holes. The grade is computed from the results of detailed sampling. Measured ore will be delineated by data points no more than 1½ miles apart if geologic inference shows these projections to be reasonable. Measured ore will not be delineated by less than 3 data points that meet all other distance and thickness and grade criteria. Measured ore will not be projected further than ½ mile from a data point which meets thickness and quality standards where no projection or geologic inference data exists.

Parcels located in the vicinity of potash open mine workings or in the Secretary's Potash Area include: -056, -057, -058, -060, and 061.

3.13 Cave/Karst

The project is located in gypsum karst terrain, a landform that is characterized by underground drainage through solutionally enlarged conduits. Gypsum karst terrain may contain sinkholes, sinking streams, caves, and springs. Sinkholes leading to underground drainages and voids are common. These karst features, as well as occasional fissures and discontinuities in the bedrock, provide the primary sources for rapid recharge of the groundwater aquifers of the region.

Karst hydrologic systems in these areas are very sensitive to the introduction of contaminants. Caves also provide highly unique wildlife habitat and repositories for paleontologic and cultural materials. They are often used for recreational purposes.

All or portions of the following parcels containing Cave/Karst concerns: None.

3.14 Noxious Weeds

The presence of those species described in the Noxious Weed List for the State of New Mexico (NMDA, 1999) is detected via continual inventory being carried on by all field going personnel. The inventory process is on-going to detect invasive populations when they are small. Once a population is found, the Bureau coordinates with various agencies, lease operators, and the land user to implement some kind of treatment to remove or control the population.

Noxious weeds, primarily African rue and Malta star thistle, were determined to exist and are scattered within the area. Small infestations of noxious weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, could result in the establishment and spread of noxious weeds on disturbed sites throughout portions of the project area. Most of the noxious weeds exist mainly along the shoulders of County roads, lease and private roads, and on production pads within the project area.

3.15 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, issued on 11 February 1994, addresses concerns over disproportionate environmental and human health impacts on minority and low-income populations. The impetus behind environmental justice is to ensure that all communities, including minority, low-income, or federally recognized tribes, live in a safe and healthful environment and the July 2009 Oil and Gas Lease Sale will not be out of conformance with this executive order.

Portions of the City of Carlsbad and the City of Hobbs consist of minorities with some low-income populations. However, none of the leases nominated fall within the city limits of either city. Most of the populations that lie near these leases are with the agricultural or mining sector and do not fall under the coverage of this executive order.

4.0 Environmental Consequences and Proposed Mitigation Measures

Alternative A

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed parcels would not be leased. There would be no new impacts from oil and gas production on the parcel lands. Oil and gas development of federal, state, and private minerals would continue on the lands surrounding the parcels. No additional natural gas or crude oil would enter the public markets and no royalties would accrue to the federal or state treasuries. The No Action Alternative would result in the continuation of the current land and resource uses on the proposed parcels and is used as the baseline for comparison of alternatives. No further analysis of the No Action alternative is presented in the following sections.

Alternative B

Alternative B – Proposed Action contained three parcels (-044, -047, and -053) which were either deferred or deleted, therefore this alternative will not be analyzed further.

Alternative C

The act of leasing the twenty-one proposed parcels (Alternative C – Preferred Action) would, by itself, have no impact on any resources in the CFO. All impacts would be linked to as yet undetermined future levels of lease development. If lease parcels were developed, short-term impacts would be stabilized or mitigated rapidly (within 5 years) and long-term impacts are those that would substantially remain for more than 5 years. Potential impacts, lease stipulations and mitigation measures are described below.

Cumulative impacts include the combined effect of past projects, specific planned projects and other reasonably foreseeable future actions such as other infield wells being located within these leases.

Potential cumulative effects may occur should an oil and gas field be discovered if these parcels are drilled and other infield wells are drilled within these leases or if these leases become part of a new unit. All actions, not just oil and gas development may occur in the area, including foreseeable non-federal actions.

4.1 Air Resources

4.1.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Air Quality

Leasing the subject tracts would have no direct impacts to air quality. Any potential effects to air quality from sale of lease parcels would occur at such time that the leases were developed.

Potential impacts of development could include increased air borne soil particles blown from new well pads or roads, exhaust emissions from drilling equipment, compressors, vehicles, and dehydration and separation facilities, as well as potential releases of GHG and volatile organic compounds during drilling or production activities. The amount of increased emissions cannot be quantified at this time since it is unknown how many wells might be drilled, the types of equipment needed if a well were to be completed successfully (e.g. compressor, separator, dehydrator), or what technologies may be employed by a given company for drilling any new wells. The degree of impact will also vary according to the characteristics of the geologic formations from which production occurs

Exploration and production of oil and gas resources would contribute an incremental increase in overall hydrocarbon emissions, including GHGs, released into the planet's atmosphere. When compared to total national or global emissions however, the amount released as a result of potential production from the proposed lease tracts would not have a measurable effect on climate change due to uncertainty and incomplete and unavailable information.

Coalbed methane does not exist within the field office and, therefore, there are no emissions from this source.

Due to the absence of regulatory requirements to measure GHG emissions and the variability of oil and gas activities on federal minerals, it is not possible to accurately quantify potential GHG emissions in the affected areas as a result of making the proposed tracts available for leasing. Some general assumptions however can be made: leasing the proposed tracts may result in the drilling of new wells.

The New Mexico Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Reference Case Projection 1990-2020 (Inventory) estimates that approximately 17.3 million metric tons of natural gas and 2.3 million metric tons of natural gas emissions are projected in 2010 as a result of oil and natural gas production, processing, transmission and distribution. As of 2008, there were 23,196 oil wells and 27,778 gas wells in New Mexico.¹

The number of oil and gas wells drilled annually in the Field Office and probable GHG emission levels, when compared to the total GHG emission estimates from the total number of oil and gas wells in the State, represents an incremental contribution to the total regional and global GHG emission levels. This incremental contribution to global GHG gases cannot be translated into effects on climate change globally or in the area of these site-specific actions. As oil and gas and natural gas production technology continues to improve in the future, one assumption is that it may be feasible to further reduce GHG emissions.

Regarding the linkage between climate change related warming and associated impacts, an assessment of the IPCC states that difficulties remain in attributing observed temperature changes at smaller than

continental scales. Therefore, it is currently beyond the scope of existing science to predict climate change on regional or local scales resulting from specific sources of GHG emissions.

¹ In 2000, approximately 17 million metric tons and 2.3 million metric tons were respectively attributed to natural gas and oil activities. As of 2002, the Inventory indicates that there were approximately 21,771 oil wells and 23,261 gas wells in the State. Uncertainties remain with respect to: the quality of historical field data, processing, and pipeline use of natural gas; does not factor in reclaimed wells and total number of new wells drilled per year; CO₂ emissions from enhanced oil recovery, which have not been estimated; and refinery fuel use-EIA indicates less than half the refinery fuel use as indicated by refinery permit data. These figures were currently under review by BLM-NMSO minerals staff at the date of publication of this EA.

Climate

The assessment of GHG emissions and climate change is in its formative phase. It is currently not feasible to know with certainty the net impacts from the proposed action on climate. The inconsistency in results of scientific models used to predict climate change at the global scale coupled with the lack of scientific models designed to predict climate change on regional or local scales, limits the ability to quantify potential future impacts of decisions made at this level. When further information on the impacts to climate change is known, such information would be incorporated into the BLM's planning and NEPA documents as appropriate.

4.1.2 Potential Mitigation

The EPA's inventory data describes "Natural Gas Systems" and "Petroleum Systems" as the two major categories of total US sources of GHG gas emissions. The inventory identifies the contributions of natural gas and petroleum systems to total CO₂ and CH₄ emissions (natural gas and petroleum systems do not produce noteworthy amounts of any of the other greenhouse gases). Within the larger category of "Natural Gas Systems", the EPA identifies emissions occurring during distinct stages of operation, including field production, processing, transmission and storage, and distribution. "Petroleum Systems" sub-activities include production field operations, crude oil transportation and crude oil refining. Within the two categories, the BLM has authority to regulate only those field production operations that are related to oil and gas measurement, and prevention of waste (via leaks, spills and unauthorized flaring and venting).

The BLM encourages industry to incorporate and implement "Best Management Practices" (BMPs), which are designed to reduce impacts to air quality by reducing emissions, surface disturbances, and dust from field production and operations. Typical measures include: adherence to BLM's Notice to Lessees' (NTL) 4(a) concerning the venting and flaring of gas on Federal leases; for natural gas emissions that cannot be economically recovered, flare hydrocarbon gases at high temperatures in order to reduce emissions of incomplete combustion; water dirt roads during periods of high use in order to reduce fugitive dust emissions; collocate wells and production facilities to reduce new surface disturbance; implementation of directional drilling and horizontal completion technologies whereby one well provides access to petroleum resources that would normally require the drilling of several vertical wellbores; require that vapor recovery systems be maintained and functional in areas where petroleum liquids are stored; and perform interim reclamation to re-vegetate areas of the pad not required for production facilities and to reduce the amount of dust from the pads.

The EPA data show that improved practices and technology and changing economics have reduced emissions from oil and gas exploration and development (Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2006). One of the factors in this improvement is the adoption by industry of the BMPs proposed by the EPA's Natural Gas Energy Star program. The Carlsbad Field Office will work with

industry to facilitate the use of the relevant BMPs for operations proposed on Federal mineral leases where such mitigation is consistent with agency policy.

Consumption of oil and gas from the nominated parcels are expected to produce GHGs. Consumption is driven by a variety of complex interacting factors including energy costs, energy efficiency, availability of other energy sources, economics, demography, and weather or climate.

Environmental and economic climate change impacts from commodity consumption are not effects of the proposed planning decisions and thus are not required to be analyzed under the NEPA. They are not direct effects, as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), because they do not occur at the same time and place as the action. Neither are they indirect effects because the proposed plan actions and resulting greenhouse gas emissions are not a proximate cause of the emissions or other factors resulting from consumption.

BLM does not possess either the regulatory nor jurisdictional authority to control emissions. Rather, all such authority must be deferred to the New Mexico Environmental Department, the state bureau delegated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to regulate GHG emissions. The effects from public consumption of petroleum products are speculative, and beyond the scope of agency authority or control. Therefore, this document does not include analysis of the consumption of resources produced as a result of planning decisions.

4.2 Soils

4.2.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Impacts to soils would occur during the construction, operation, and rehabilitation phases of lease development. Off-road travel, excavation of caliche for road and pad construction, road and pad construction, and associated rights of way construction cause soil particles to become unconsolidated and removes vegetative cover. This increases susceptibility of the soil to both wind and water erosion. Soil horizons directly below caliche capped roads and pads will be protected from erosion, but will not receive any infiltration. Nearby soils would be more susceptible to water erosion due to increased runoff from these caliche covered surfaces.

Additional wells will reduce the acreage available for grazing purposes and increase erosion and decrease available vegetation for all proposed parcels. There will be the increased risk of hydrocarbon spills within the lease as well. Increased surface disturbance will also increase the risk of noxious weed invasion and spread.

4.2.2 Potential Mitigation

Mitigation measures will be deferred to the site specific APD stage of development. Best management practices (BMPs) would be incorporated into Conditions of Approval (COAs).

Lease Parcels -046, -071 are within fragile soil locations containing gypsiferous soils, active dunes or steep slopes and carry the S-17 Slopes & Fragile Soils stipulation.

4.3 Vegetation

4.3.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Vegetation will be lost within the construction areas of pads, roads, and rights of ways. Those areas covered in caliche, such as pads and roads, would have no vegetation for the life of the well. Rights-of-ways could revegetate in one to two years with proper reclamation and adequate precipitation. Poor reclamation practices followed by inadequate precipitation over several growing seasons could result in loss of vegetative cover, leading to weed invasion and deterioration of native vegetation.

Impacts to vegetation depend on development. These acres will produce no vegetation, due to caliche covered surfaces with each well in production. These acres should be in adequate vegetative cover in three to five growing seasons, if proper reclamation procedures are followed, and adequate precipitation is received, after the well is plugged.

4.3.2 Potential Mitigation

Specific mitigation measures will be determined when site specific development proposals are received and will be incorporated as COAs.

4.4 Visual Resources

4.4.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Oil and gas development (wells, pads, storage tanks, pipelines, transfer stations, powerlines, roads, and truck traffic) can create many visual scars on the landscape. Development can create contrast to the landscape's natural form, line, color, and texture. Pads, tanks, roads, powerlines, and pipelines introduce unnatural forms into the landscape. Clearing for pads, roads, and pipelines create unnatural color, line and texture changes. Tanks and poles add vertical trends to the general flat landscapes. The more prominent these visual contrasts, the more the project will stand out and distract from the natural view of the landscape. The more unnatural distractions added to the landscape the more displeasing the landscape will look.

Each surface development visually impacts the landscape. Each project may meet or exceed the area's Visual Resource Management (VRM) objectives; however, as an entire oil field is developed, the small visual impacts will accumulate to create harsh scars on the landscape. The cumulative effects will degrade the visual esthetics and public's appreciation for their surrounding environment. To avoid this result, all projects (regardless of VRM class) should be hidden, masked, and reclaimed as best as possible with BMPs.

4.4.2 Potential Mitigation

Mitigation measures to reduce impacts of development and maintain Visual Resource Class Objectives may include landform considerations such as moving locations to areas with less slope, changing road width and grade, changing alignment to follow existing grades, and prohibiting dumping of excess material on downhill slopes. Earthwork COAs may include rounding or warping slopes, retaining rocks, trees and drainage, adding mulch, hydromulch, or topsoil, shaping cuts and fills to appear as natural forms, cutting rock areas so forms are irregular, designing to take advantage of natural screens (i.e., vegetation, land forms), and grass seeding of cuts and fills. Topography considerations may require locating projects away from prominent topographic features and designing projects to blend with topographic forms in shape and placement. Additional COAs for retaining vegetation may include using retaining walls on fill slopes, reducing surface disturbance, protecting roots from damage during excavations, mulching cleared areas, controlling planting times, furrowing slopes, planting holes on cut/fill slopes, choosing native plant species, stockpiling and reusing topsoil, fertilizing, mulching, and watering vegetation, utilizing existing roads, limiting work within construction area, selecting type of equipment to be used and minimizing clearing size. Permanent structures are impacts for the life of the project. To minimize the number of visible structures, COAs will be applied, requiring use of earth-tone paints and stains and natural stone surfaces, burying all or part of the structure, selecting paint finishes with low levels of reflectivity (i.e., flat), redesign structures to blend with surroundings, and relocating structures. Interim reclamation measures for the working life of the pad may be implemented to reduce visual impacts, such as partial re-vegetation of the pad after initial drilling is complete to allow only necessary surface use and access requirements. COAs will be added to the site specific APD stage of development.

COAs may require utilities and right-of-ways related to the development of the proposed lease parcels may be stipulated to make crossings at right angles of corridors, setting structures a maximum distance from the crossing, leaving vegetation along the roadside, minimizing viewing time, and utilizing natural screening.

No Visual Resource Management SENM-S-25 stipulations apply to lease parcels offered in the July 2009 sale.

4.5 Recreation

4.5.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Potential effects could occur on dispersed recreation activities such as big game hunting in certain pastures of individual parcels, but these effects cannot be determined until site specific development proposals are received at the APD stage.

Additional wells will reduce the acreage available for recreation in open space on public land. Dispersed recreation activities, such as off-road driving, hunting, and hiking will be impacted by increased traffic, visual intrusions, noise, trash, and other related results of oil and gas development. Increased above ground facilities fragment open space and reduce the natural setting of areas. Some recreation pursuits will be limited by additional hazards created by facilities and infrastructure related to development.

4.5.2 Potential Mitigation

Mitigations for impacts to recreation will be determined when specific sites for development are determined. Mitigations may include moving locations, increased safety precautions during construction, relocating existing trails, reducing visual impacts, implementing noise control devices on facilities, and co-locating facilities and the use of corridors to reduce surface disturbance.

4.6 Wildlife

4.6.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

The severity of effects depends on the sensitivity of the species affected. The species present in these areas tend to vacate traditional habitats under continued and increasing pressure from petroleum activities. Additional wells would increase the risk to wildlife in the developing area due to noise and visual impacts (for example, compressor stations, increased number of operating pumpjacks, powerlines (line hum in wind), drilling rigs, and increased vehicular traffic). This could potentially cause wildlife to avoid these areas, including wildlife watering units, and relocate to other areas that have a lesser degree of development. Disturbance to the surface itself could potentially degrade or fragment habitat to such a degree that it may become unusable for certain species at a localized level. There also could potentially be other forms of surface disturbance on developing leases such as the installation of caliche pits, the addition of oil and gas field infrastructure such as powerlines, pipelines, and tank batteries or other storage facilities, and the construction of new roads that potentially fragment habitat and increase the risk of collision between vehicles and wildlife. Effects on raptor nests or heronries could result in a reduction of nesting habitat for raptors or herons thus reducing the likelihood of sustaining the local population.

Cumulative adverse effects could potentially result in a decrease in wildlife populations in all proposed lease parcels if full infield development of oil and gas were to occur. These operations could potentially reduce and possibly eliminate habitat for some species.

4.6.2 Potential Mitigation

The BLM will continue to require oil and gas lessees to conduct operations in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts to wildlife. To that end, the BLM will continue to apply reasonable measures to all oil and gas activities.

In the event that a wildlife water development is in fact within a parcel, the SENM-S-15 stipulation will be attached as a condition-of-approval at the APD stage. This will afford some protection to the habitat around the wildlife water. Therefore, no adverse effects to water developments are expected.

Site-specific COAs or BMPs may be developed at the APD stage to further mitigate direct and indirect effects.

4.7 Special Status Species

4.7.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Lesser Prairie-Chicken

Development of these leases could potentially impact local populations of lesser prairie-chicken. Construction of the location and around-the-clock noise generated from drilling of the well could impact the lesser prairie-chicken by reducing the establishment of seasonal "booming grounds" or leks, thus possibly reducing reproductive success in the species. It is believed that the noise generated by drilling rigs or propane/diesel operated pumpjack motors (unmuffled) could mask the booming of the male prairie-chicken and thus, the females cannot hear the booming. In turn, female lesser prairie-chicken would not arrive at the booming ground, and subsequently, there would be decreased courtship interaction and possibly decreased reproduction. Decreased reproduction and the loss of recruitment into the local population would result in an absence of younger male lesser prairie-chickens to replace mature male lesser prairie-chicken once they expire, eventually causing the lek to disband and become inactive. Additionally, habitat fragmentation caused by development could possibly decrease the habitat available for nesting, brooding and feeding activities.

Sand Dune Lizard

Impacts to sand dune lizards, if any, will be minimal because a stipulation requiring a buffer up to 200 meters from suitable habitat will be applied or a No Surface Occupancy stipulation will be applied to areas with occupied or suitable habitat. Construction of the location in sand dune complexes that are suitable habitat or occupied habitat could impact local populations of sand dune lizard by reducing the size of habitat available to the species and possibly extirpating sand dune lizards from the location. However, with the negotiation of well pads, roads and infrastructure associated with the development of the oil field, extirpations of local populations of sand dune lizard could be avoided as long as development is moved out of occupied or suitable sand dune lizard habitat.

4.7.2 Potential Mitigation

Lesser Prairie-Chicken

Lesser prairie-chicken are afforded specific protection measures pertaining to new drilling under the Pecos District Special Status Species Resource Management Plan Amendment of 2008. The protections include a ban on new drilling during the breeding season (between March 1 and June 15) and a restriction on other production activities, such as land survey and construction, between the hours of 3AM and 9AM. These restrictions apply to areas that contain lesser prairie-chicken habitat consisting of tall bunchgrasses (*Andropogon* spp., *Sporobolus* spp.), sand sage (*Artemisia filifolia*), and typically shinny oak (*Quercus havardii*). Exceptions to the stipulations will be considered under the criteria set forth in the RMPA.

Accordingly, approval of a permit to drill a well in lesser prairie-chicken habitat would be granted subject to the following conditions (SENM-S-22):

Timing Limitation Lease Stipulation / Condition of Approval for lesser prairie-chicken:

Oil and gas activities including 3-D geophysical exploration, and drilling will not be allowed in lesser prairie-chicken habitat during the period from March 1 through June 15 annually. During that period, other activities that produce noise or involve human activity, such as the maintenance of oil and gas facilities, geophysical exploration or 3-D seismic operations, and

pipeline, road, and well pad construction, will be allowed except between 3:00 am and 9:00 am. The 3:00 am to 9:00 am restriction will not apply to normal, around-the-clock operations, such as venting, flaring, or pumping, which do not require a human presence during this period. Additionally, no new drilling will be allowed within up to 200 meters of leks known at the time of permitting. Normal vehicle use on existing roads will not be restricted. Exhaust noise from pump jack engines must be muffled or otherwise controlled so as not to exceed 75 db measured at 30 feet from the source of the noise.

In light of these requirements and mitigation measures, minimal impacts to the lesser prairie-chicken are anticipated as a result of oil and gas activity.

Exceptions to the above requirements will be considered in emergency situations such as mechanical failures, however, these exceptions will not be granted if BLM determines, on the basis of biological data or other relevant facts or circumstances, that the grant of an exception would disrupt prairie-chicken booming activity during the breeding season. Requests for exceptions on a non-emergency basis may also be considered but these exceptions will not be granted if BLM determines that there are prairie-chicken sightings, historic leks and or active leks within 1.5 miles of the proposed location, or any combination of the above mentioned criteria combined with suitable habitat. The RMPA also identifies where non-emergency exceptions will not be granted, including Habitat Evaluation Areas.

If observations of lesser prairie-chickens are made, immediate contact with the local BLM office is required.

Parcels -046,-054, -056, -057, -058, -059, -060, -061, -062, -063, -064, -065, -066, -067, -068, -069, -071, -128, and 129 contain potential lesser prairie-chicken habitat and SENM-S-22 applies.

Sand Dune Lizard

Given the current Federal Candidate status of this species, the BLM is mandated to carry out management consistent with the principles of multiple use, for the conservation of candidate species and their habitats and shall ensure that actions authorized, funded, or carried out do not contribute to the need to list any of these species as Threatened or Endangered (Bureau Manual 6840.06). For the protection of the species and suitable/occupied habitat, lease stipulation LN-2 may require surveys for the species and limit development to areas outside suitable or occupied habitat. In addition, the SENM-S-23 stipulation restricts surface disturbance up to 200 meters of suitable or occupied habitat.

Parcels -058 and -071 lie within occupied/suitable SDL habitat. These parcels carry the LN-2 and SENM-S-23 stipulations.

Special Status Species RMPA

Parcels nominated in these areas are reviewed by the State Director for concurrence based on the Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment of April 2008. The BLM will continue to require oil and gas lessees to conduct operations in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts to wildlife and special status species. To that end, the BLM will continue to apply reasonable measures to all oil and gas activities.

Leasing with requirements for Plans of Development (PODs) or Conditions of Approval (COAs) to ensure orderly development within a minimum of surface impact in lesser prairie-chicken and sand dune lizard habitats will be considered on a case-by-case basis, providing impacts from exploration and development will not cause unnecessary or undue impact to efforts to restore habitat. PODs may be not be required for every existing lease on the Planning Area, but are required when requested by the BLM.

4.8 Range

4.8.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

The construction of pads, pits, roads, and rights of way would cause forage to be lost on portions of eleven allotments. On average, it takes approximately 6 acres of vegetation per Animal Unit Month (AUM), which is the amount of forage needed to support one cow for one month. Using this figure and the reasonable foreseeable development scenario, a likely range from less than 1 to as many as 15 AUMs would be lost per allotment. These numbers would not cause the 10 year permit or lease to be adjusted.

There are occasional livestock injuries or deaths due to accidents such as collisions with vehicles, falling into mud pits or other excavations, and ingesting plastic or other materials present at the work site. Construction activities can damage range improvements such as fences and pipelines. These impacts make the day to day livestock management actions more difficult.

Adverse cumulative effects would include reduced acreages for grazing purposes. Other detriments such as increased risk of weed encroachment onto rangelands caused by increased road traffic (seed dispersion) thereby reducing desirable vegetation species and therefore reducing stocking rates.

4.8.2 Potential Mitigation

Mitigation will be deferred to the site specific APD stage of development. BLM currently consults with grazing permittees on a site by site basis as part of the Approved Plan to Drill process. BMPs would be incorporated into COAs.

4.9 Watershed/Water Resources/Ground Water/Drinking Water Quality

4.9.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Potential impacts of drilling operations to water resources could include the loss of drilling fluids, which sometimes contain heavy metals and other chemicals, and cement. This may cause the pollution of the ground water recharge areas and adversely impact water quality. Additionally, cementing operations could plug some of the underground drainages and restrict ground water flow, thereby reducing the recharge quality and quantity of springs, resurgences, and water tables and reducing the discharge (water availability) from seeps, springs, and water wells. Potential impacts of well production include the introduction of hydrocarbons and other chemicals into underground drainages and recharge areas as a result of leaks or spills from casings in the well, storage tanks, mud pits, pipelines, or other production facilities. This may also degrade water quality. In addition, drilling an oil or gas well may require large quantities of water, especially if porous and permeable formations are encountered. If fresh water is used, this could reduce natural flow from seeps, springs, and water wells.

With any surface disturbance there will be decreased infiltration rates which may lead to more rapid runoff responses to precipitation events. The cumulative impacts of surface disturbance could lead to: 1) increased occurrence and magnitude of flood events, 2) increased erosion, 3) higher sediment loads in downstream surface waters, and 4) decreased groundwater recharge.

4.9.2 Potential Mitigation

Mitigation will be deferred to the site specific APD stage of development. BMPs would be incorporated into COAs.

4.10 Wetland, Riparian Areas and Floodplains

4.10.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

No adverse impacts are expected for wetland, floodplains or riparian areas, as stipulations for a minimum 200-meter buffer from the edge of the floodplain or wetland is applied to these parcels. By moving pads,

roads, and rights of ways at least 200 meters away from the edge of the wetland or riparian areas, the values these areas provide are protected.

The risk of hydrocarbon spills would threaten these water resources as well as seepage from any pits containing hydrocarbons or brines. Poor cement jobs or corroded or bad casing or tubing downhole during production operations can enter potentially viable aquifers. There is always the unfortunate possibility of a well blowout which can release thousands of barrels of crude hydrocarbon either on or under the surface. These events can propagate downstream and either damage or destroy these fragile environments which contain lush grasses, aquatic birds and their nesting environment and aquatic life such as fishes and crustaceans.

4.10.2 Potential Mitigation

The mitigative measures addressed below are meant to protect wetlands and riparian areas of concern.

The following proposed parcels contain SENM S-18 stipulations for streams, rivers and floodplains: None.

The following parcels contain SENM-19 stipulations for Playas: -072.

The following lease parcels have earthen tanks or springs within their lease parcel boundaries and carry the SENM-S-20 stipulation: -128. Some lease parcels may have unidentified windmills for livestock watering purposes and would require a 200-meter buffer at the APD stage.

Site specific COAs will be incorporated at the APD stage of development.

4.11 Cultural Resources

4.11.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Cultural/Paleontological Resources

There will be no immediate consequence to the environment as a result of the leasing of any of these parcels with regard to cultural or paleontological resources. This document deals only with lease sale actions; any subsequent realty or oil and gas projects or development will be subject to a separate NEPA document and compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. Native American consultation was conducted by certified mail regarding lease sale activities and no traditional cultural properties were identified. No specific heritage related issues have been identified during the consultation process. The BLM does acknowledge that the potential exists for the Native American community to identify heritage related issues in the future as specific actions are proposed.

As oil and gas development actions or associated realty actions are proposed, the areas of potential effect (APE) will be defined and assessments of the impacts upon cultural and paleontological resources will be undertaken. NEPA and Sec. 106 compliance will be completed on all undertakings. In the event that cultural or paleontological resources are identified within a project area, an evaluation of significance will occur and steps will be taken to mitigate impacts to that resource. Mitigation most frequently involves site avoidance, but may rarely include data recovery or compensation. It should be noted that BLM has discretionary control over mitigation stipulations or avoidance measures imposed on a project.

BLM may require development activities to be moved if necessary to protect cultural resources. This should allow nearly all sites to be avoided. Sites that cannot be avoided will be evaluated for listing on the National Register and mitigation measures will be instituted if the site is found eligible. Should development uncover subsurface sites, the lessee is required to halt all work until the site can be evaluated and proper mitigation and avoidance measures identified.

Prior to development of leases (-046, -054, -056, -057, -058) the project proponent may choose to participate in the Permian Basin MOA by planning to avoid all known NRHP eligible and potentially eligible cultural resources, the proponent will contribute funds commensurate to the undertaking into an account for offsite mitigation. Participation in the MOA serves as mitigation for the effects of this project on cultural resources. If any skeletal remains or funerary objects are discovered by any activities, the project proponent will cease activities in the area of discovery and notify the BLM within 24 hours as required by the Permian Basin MOA. Work shall not resume until a Notice to Proceed is issued by the BLM.

Cumulative Impact Analysis for Cultural Resources

Cultural resources on public lands, including archaeological sites and historic properties, are protected by federal law and regulations. Current operations must comply with these protective regulations, and BLM requires the completion of cultural resource inventories prior to surface disturbing activities. These inventories have been used to identify sites potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and to identify sites which BLM has required past exploration and development activities to avoid. Because Class III cultural resource inventories must be completed, the potential for increased impacts on cultural artifacts would be minimized. By avoiding known cultural and historical sites during the layout of drill sites, access roads, pipeline corridors, and other realty actions, the potential for incremental increases in cumulative impacts would be avoided.

Completion of cultural resource inventories would have a beneficial, cumulative impact on the level of cultural information about the project area. Some unintentional damage to subsurface resources could occur during grading or excavation activities. Newly built roads can open previously inaccessible areas to illegal collecting and destruction of archaeological resources by vandalism, however, implementation of resource protection and mitigation would protect such resources upon discovery.

Cumulative Impact Analysis for Paleontological Resources

Foreseeable and unforeseen projects, including mining of surface mineral resources and construction materials may have cumulative impacts on paleontological resources. Construction can directly impact fossil resources and newly built roads can open previously inaccessible areas to illegal collecting and destruction of fossil resources by vandalism. Scientifically noteworthy fossils and fossil localities containing them are rare and not uniformly distributed throughout the geologic deposits. Loss of fossil resources from rare and scientifically important localities and the loss of the localities themselves by destruction may have an unforeseen cumulative effect. Development could, however increase the potential for discovering scientifically noteworthy fossil resources, if the nature and significance of the paleontological material is recognized; adequate measures would be applied to ensure proper treatment and recovery of the resource.

These areas can be identified by referring to detailed geologic maps on a case-by-case basis. Should construction activities reveal any new paleontological sites, construction would be delayed until salvage efforts are undertaken. Construction could also be relocated, if the site were judged to have enough significance as to warrant moving the activity.

4.11.2 Potential Mitigation

All parcels within the Carlsbad Field Office are leased with the Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice Stipulation (NM-LN-11). Depending on the nature of the lease developments being proposed and the cultural resources potentially affected, compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13007 could require intensive cultural resource inventories, Native American consultation, and other mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects - the costs for which will be borne by the lessee. In addition, the BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activities that are likely to affect traditional cultural places or sacred sites for which no mitigation measures are possible.

4.12 Potash Resources

4.12.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Potash resources in SE New Mexico are located in an area governed by the rules of the Secretary of the Interior's 1986 Order dated October 21, 1986. This area is commonly called the Secretary's Potash Area. The Secretary's 1986 Order was written to establish rules for concurrent operations in prospecting for, development and production of oil and gas and potash deposits owned by the United States within the designated Potash Area. The Potash Area completely encompasses the Known Potash Leasing Area which was established for the administration of potassium leasing.

There are 3 tracts (056, 057, & 058) located in the Known Potash Leasing Area (KPLA) and two others (060 and 061) that are located outside of the KPLA but in the Secretary's Potash Area. Tracts 060 and 061 do not have any known potash resources located within the tracts and will not be discussed further. The other 3 tracts are located in areas classified as Inferred Ore Resources. Inferred Ore Resources are those resources which are probable, but tonnage and grade cannot be computed due to the absence of specific data. Lithologic descriptions and Gamma logs indicate probable mineralization, and the data can be reasonably correlated.

Drilling for oil and gas on parcels 056, 057, & 058 could have an adverse effect on potash resources if further core drilling proves up reserves in these areas. If potash reserves are present, the drilling of each new well will have an adverse cumulative impact on potash resources. Drilling many wells in an area may have a large enough impact as to make the area unmineable. Reserves are lost because a support pillar of sufficient size must be left or extraction of the reserves around the well bore must be held to an amount where subsidence does not occur as to harm the well bore.

These 3 tracts have previously been partially or entirely leased for oil and gas. Tract 056 has had 5 wells drilled in the past, 4 for oil and one for gas. Three of the oil wells and the gas well produced at some time, but are now plugged and abandoned. The fifth well was a dry hole. Tract 057 has had two shallow oil wells drilled in the past, neither of which produced and both are now plugged and abandoned. Tracts 056 and 057 are adjacent to one another. The two tracts and the acreage immediately surrounding the tracts have had 12 wells drilled at some point. The presence of these wells has had significant impacts to potash resources on these two tracts. Further drilling these tracts will have little cumulative effect on potash reserves. Only the 40 acres in the SWSE of section 22 in tract 056 and the 40 acres in the SWNW of section 23 of tract 057 and the adjacent area to the east of the tract 057 would have some cumulative impacts from additional drilling.

Parcel 058 is also located over Inferred Potash Resources. Of the three parcels, these resources have a highest chance of being conventionally mined. The area surrounding this tract has been nominated for competitive potassium leasing and is currently being processed for competitive sale. This tract has had one deep gas well drilled in the past. The presence of this well bore has impacted potash resources in a radius of ½ mile around the well bore. Support pillars would have to be left around the well bore to prevent subsidence. Any additional wells drilled sufficiently far from the existing well will have a negative cumulative impact on the potash resources.

4.12.2 Potential Mitigation

The Secretary of the Interior recognized that there would be some loss of potash resources when oil and gas wells were drilled in the potash area. The Secretary's 1986 Order states that the successful applicant for a noncompetitive oil and gas lease and any party awarded a competitive lease, for lands included in

the designated Potash Area is required, as a condition to the issuance of such lease, to execute a stipulation to the lease as follows:

Drilling for oil and gas shall be permitted only in the event that the lessee established to the satisfaction of the authorized officer, Bureau of Land management, that such drilling will not interfere with the mining and recovery of potash deposits, or the interest of the United States will best be served by permitting such drilling.

No wells shall be drilled for oil or gas at a location which in the opinion of the authorized officer, would result in undue waste of potash deposits or constitute a hazard to or unduly interfere with mining operations being conducted for the extraction of potash deposits.

When the authorized officer determines that unitization is necessary for orderly oil and gas development and proper protection of potash deposits, no well shall be drilled for oil or gas except pursuant to a unit plan approved by the authorized officer.

The Drilling or the abandonment of any well on said lease shall be done in accordance with applicable oil and gas operating regulations including such requirements as the authorized officer may prescribe as necessary to prevent the infiltration of oil, gas or water into formations containing potash deposits or into mines or workings being utilized in the extraction of such deposits.

The above conditions of the Secretary's 1986 Order are included in lease stipulation SENM-S-1 which will be attached to each of these leases. The SENM-S-1 Potash Stipulation allows the BLM to mitigate potential impacts as described in Section 4.12.1 at the APD stage of lease development.

The area within tracts 056, 057, and 058 is currently classified as inferred potash resources. If future core drilling delineates sufficient ore to change the classification to measured ore reserves, then drill islands could be established pursuant to the Secretary's 1986 Order. Oil and gas wells can be drilled from these islands. The order states:

Drilling of vertical or directional holes shall be permitted from a drilling island located within a potash enclave when: (1) There are no barren areas within the enclave or drilling is not permitted on the established barren area(s) within the enclave because of interference with mining operations; (2) the objective oil and gas formation beneath the lease cannot be reached by a well which is vertically or directionally drilled from a permitted location within the barren area(s); or (3) in the opinion of the authorized officer, the target formation beneath a remote interior lease cannot be reached by a well directionally drilled from a surface location outside the potash enclave. Under these circumstances, the authorized officer shall establish an island within the potash enclave from which the drilling of that well and subsequent wells will be permitted. The authorized officer, in establishing any such island, will, consistent with present directional drilling capabilities, select a site which shall minimize the loss of potash ore. No island shall be established within one mile of any area where approved mining operations will be conducted within three years. To assist the authorized officer in this regard, he/she may require affected potash mining operators to furnish a three-year mining plan.

It is current BLM practice to establish drill islands around existing oil and gas wells, from which additional wells can be drilled. The presence of old wells in the 3 tracts leaves ample opportunity to mitigate further impacts to potential potash reserves.

The stipulations attached to the lease and the Secretary's 1986 Order allows for BLM minimize and to mitigate potential impacts to potash reserves.

4.13 Cave/Karst

4.13.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Cave and karst features provide direct conduits leading to groundwater. These conduits can quickly transport surface and subsurface contaminants directly into underground water systems and freshwater aquifers without filtration or biodegradation as a result of the development of oil and gas leases. In addition, contaminants spilled or leaked into or onto cave/karst zone surfaces and subsurfaces may lead directly to the disruption, displacement, or extermination of cave species and critical biological processes. In extreme or rare cases, a buildup of hydrocarbons in cave systems due to surface leaks or spills could potentially cause underground ignitions or asphyxiation of wildlife or humans within the cave.

In cave and karst terrains, rainfall and surface runoff is directly channeled into natural underground water systems and aquifers. Changes in geologic formation integrity, runoff quantity/quality, drainage course, rainfall percolation factors, vegetation, surface contour, and other surface factors can negatively impact cave ecosystems and aquifer recharge processes. Blasting, heavy vibrations, and focusing of surface drainages can lead to slow subsidence, sudden collapse of subsurface voids, and/or cave ecosystem damage.

The construction of roads, pipelines, well pads and utilities can impact bedrock integrity and reroute, impede, focus, or erode natural surface drainage systems. Increased silting and sedimentation from construction can plug downstream sinkholes, caves, springs, and other components of aquifer recharge systems and result in adverse impacts to aquifer quality and cave environments. Any contaminants released into the environment during or after construction can impact aquifers and cave systems. A possibility exists for slow subsidence or sudden surface collapse during construction operations due to collapse of underlying cave passages and voids. This would cause associated safety hazards to the operator and the potential for increased environmental impact. Subsidence processes can be triggered by blasting, intense vibrations, rerouting of surface drainages, focusing of surface drainage, and general surface disturbance.

Blasting fractures in bedrock can serve as direct conduits for transfer of contaminants into cave and groundwater systems. Blasting also creates an expanded volume of rock rubble that cannot be reclaimed to natural contours, soil condition, or native vegetative condition. As such, surface and subsurface disruptions from blasting procedures can lead to permanent changes in vegetation, rainfall percolation, silting/erosion factors, aquifer recharge, and freshwater quality and can increase the risk of contaminant migration from drilling/production facilities built atop the blast area.

During drilling, previously unknown cave and karst features could be encountered. If a void is encountered while drilling and a loss of circulation occurs, lost drilling fluids can directly contaminate groundwater recharge areas, aquifers, and groundwater quality. Drilling operations can also lead to sudden collapse of underground voids. Cementing operations may plug or alter groundwater flow, potentially reducing the water quantity at springs and water wells. Inadequate subsurface cementing, casing, and cave/aquifer protection measures can lead to the migration of oil, gas, drilling fluids, and produced saltwater into cave systems and freshwater aquifers.

4.13.2 Potential Mitigation

In order to mitigate potential impacts to Cave/Karst Resources, lease stipulations S-21 Caves and Karst Stipulation and LN-1 Potential Cave or Karst Occurrence Lease Notice would be attached to lease parcels. Potential mitigations that could be developed during the APD and lease development stages may include: changes in drilling operations, special casing and cementing programs, modification in surface

activities, cave/karst avoidance or other reasonable measures.

4.14 Noxious Weeds

4.14.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Any surface disturbance can increase the possibility of establishment of new populations of invasive non-native species. The likelihood of this happening cannot be predicted with existing information. At the APD stage, BLM requirements for use of weed control strategies would minimize the potential for spread of these species.

Cumulative adverse effects to resource values because of noxious weeds would include increased surface disturbance, increasing the risk of noxious weed invasion and spread.

4.14.2 Potential Mitigation

New infestations of noxious weeds would be prevented or kept to small localized areas on drill pads if stipulations for proper control methods are followed. However, since current populations of noxious weeds do exist, surface disturbance associated with lease development could allow the populations to increase in size where they currently exist, or spread to other sites. Weed seeds may be picked up on the tires of vehicles and then spread across the landscape. If noxious weeds are detected, abatement measures would be implemented. These include weed inventory surveys, weed monitoring programs, and a spraying program.

The spraying program would reduce or eliminate existing populations, control the spread of current populations, or prevent the establishment of new populations. Measures to ensure the prevention of the spread of noxious weeds will be in place such as the washing of vehicles before leaving infested areas. The CFO works closely with the surrounding communities and the oil and gas industry to monitor and treat heavily infested areas with chemical before habitat areas are invaded.

4.15 Environmental Justice

4.15.1 Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Issuing any or all of these leases may result in a major hydrocarbon discovery. Increased employment in Hobbs or Carlsbad would aid the minority and low income populations. Otherwise the lease sale does not have potential to disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations. If a major discovery of hydrocarbons results from the July 2009 Oil and Gas Lease Sale, this has the potential to increase the population of the Cities of Hobbs and Carlsbad and the aforementioned communities placing stress on housing, schools, commerce and emergency services in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties.

4.15.2 Potential Mitigation

No mitigation would be required as a result of this project.

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This section lists individual resource specialists located within the CFO as well as other individuals and agencies who were contacted during the development of this document.

Table 5.1
Summary of Contacts Made During Preparation of Document and Interdisciplinary Team

ID Team Member/ Contact Name	Title	Organization
Stephen Daly	Soil Conservationist	BLM-CFO
Marcos Molinar	GIS Specialist	BLM-CFO
Jim Rutley	Solid Minerals Geologist	BLM-CFO
Jim Goodbar	Senior Cave Specialist	BLM-CFO
Aaron Stockton	Natural Resource Specialist	BLM-CFO
Owen Lofton	Realty Specialist	BLM-CFO
Dario Lunardi	Cartographer, Acting Recreation Specialist	BLM-CFO
Donald Peterson	Assistant Field Manager Lands & Minerals	BLM-CFO
James B. Smith	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	BLM-CFO
George H. MacDonell	Archaeologist	BLM-CFO
Robert Pawelek	Natural Resources Specialist	BLM-CFO
Rebecca Hunt	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	BLM-CFO
Ty Allen	Wildlife Biologist	BLM CFO
James Rutley	Geologist	BLM-CF)
Natalie Rhoads	Cartographer	BLM-CFO
Howard Parman	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	BLM-RFO
George Farmer	Habitat Officer	NM Dept of Game & Fish
Timothy Breen	Biologist	USFWS
Tony Herrell	Deputy State Director – Minerals	BLM NM State Office
Gloria Baca	Land Law Examiner	BLM NM State Office
Bernadine Martinez	Land Law Examiner	BLM NM State Office
Rebecca Olivas	Land Law Examiner	BLM NM State Office
Margie Dupre	Land Law Examiner	BLM NM State Office
Robert Benavides	Governor	Pueblo of Isleta
Mark Chino	President	Mescalero Apache Tribe
Holly Houghton	THPO	Mescalero Apache Tribe
Wallace Bitsedy	Tribal Administrator	Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Wallace Coffey	Chairman	Comanche Indian Tribe
Billy Evans Horse	Chairman	Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
Benjamin H. Nuvamsa	Chairman	Hopi Tribal Council
Arturo Senclair	Governor	Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Table 5.2
Summary of Public Comments Received

The table below summarizes the comments received in response to the two week public comment period of the nominated lease parcels.

No.	Comment	BLM Response
1	NOS and APD locations described in the January 29, 2009 30 Day Posting Period Report do not match the locations of the July 2009 nominated lease parcels.	There are no NOS or APD locations associated with the proposed lease parcels. NOS and APD locations are submitted after a lease parcel has been auctioned and issued.
2	BLM must adhere to statutory requirements (i.e., NEPA, ESA, FLPMA).	See attached EA Sections 1.1.2 and 1.3
3	Greenhouse Gas Emissions: NEPA analysis must assess and disclose environmental impacts of the proposed action to global climate change.	See attached EA Section 4.1
4	Wildlife habitat fragmentation, spread of noxious weeds, impacts to water quality, increase road building and traffic, etc. must be analyzed.	See attached EA Section 4

A comment letter was received from the Center for Biological Diversity (Center) on February 2, 2009 that provided comments on proposed oil and gas well locations posted in the *30-Day Posting Period Report* dated January 20, 2009 and parcels nominated for the July 2009 competitive oil and gas lease auction. Responses to the comments made in regards to the nominated lease parcels are provided below. In addition, a letter was sent to the Center from the BLM NM State Office on March 9, 2009 that addressed the Center's requests for additional information on the July 2009 and future lease sales. Copies of the letters are available at the BLM Carlsbad Field Office.

6.0 AUTHORITIES

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):

40 CFR All Parts and Sections inclusive Protection of Environment, Revised as of July 1, 2001.

43 CFR, All Parts and Sections inclusive - Public Lands: Interior. Revised as of October 1, 2000.

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New Mexico GHG Inventory and Reference Case Projection 1990-2020 (Draft) – June 2005. (Available on the Internet: <http://www.nmclimatechange.us/ewebeditpro/items/O117F6527.pdf>)

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Sebastian, L. and Larralde, S. 1989. Living on the Land: 11,000 Years of Human Adaptation in Southeastern New Mexico.

Williams, S. O. 1997. New Mexico. Nat. Audubon Soc. Field Notes 51: 782–785.

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US Government Accountability Office Report "Climate Change, Agencies Should Develop Guidance for Addressing the Effects on Federal Land and Water Resources" GAO-07-863, August 2007 (1st paragraph, 1st page, GAO Highlights) at: <http://www.gao.gov/news.items/d07863.pdf>

8.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Parcel List and Stipulations

APPENDIX 1:
Carlsbad Field Office July 2009 Lease Sale Parcels

Carlsbad FO

NM-200907-044 1357.280 Acres

 T.0250S, R.0250E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 017 S2;
 019 E2, SESW;
 020 SE;
 030 LOTS 3,4;
 030 E2, SENW, E2SW;

Eddy County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 44518, NMNM 94836,

NMNM 101087, NMNM 101088

Formerly Lease No.

Stipulations:

NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice

SENM-S-15 Wildlife Habitat Projects

SENM-S-32 VRM-Class III Guadalupe Escarpment

SENM-S-21 Caves and Karst

SENM-LN-1 Cave - Karst Occurrence Area

SENM-S-17 Slopes or Fragile Soils

Fragile Soils - Gypsum

SENM-S-18 Streams, Rivers, and Floodplains

Floodplain

SENM-S-39 Plan of Development

Southern CFO Resource Protection Area

Chosa Draw ACEC in SE Section 20 -

DEFER PENDING RMP REVISION

NM-200907-045 160.000 Acres

 T.0250S, R.0280E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 022 NW;

Eddy County

Roswell FO

NMNM 100848

Formerly Lease No.

Stipulations:

NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice

SENM-S-39 Plan of Development

Southern CFO Resource Protection Area

NM-200907-046 80.000 Acres

 T.0170S, R.0290E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 012 S2NW;
 012 ALL FORMATIONS EXCEPT;
 012 GRAYBURG FORMATION AS;
 012 DEFINED BY SEC2 (F) OF;
 012 UNIT AGREEMNT;

Eddy County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 7753

NOTE TO FO: WITHIN UA NMNM 71043-X

Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
SENM-S-17 Slopes or Fragile Soils
Dunes
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-047 183.700 Acres
 T.0260S, R.0290E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 018 SE, EXCEPT 26.90 AC LYING;
 018 WITHIN RED BLUFF RSVR;
 019 N2NE, EXCPT 29.4 AC LYING;
 019 WITHIN RED BLUFF RSVR;

Eddy County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 28177
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
SENM-S-25 Visual Resource Management
SENM-S-43 NSO Pecos River Corridor
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-17 Slopes or Fragile Soils
Slopes
SENM-S-18 Streams, Rivers, and Floodplains
Floodplain
SENM-S-39 Plan of Development
Southern CFO Resource Protection Area
DELETE

NM-200907-053 320.000 Acres
 T.0200S, R.0320E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 015 W2;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NOTE: NOL USGS MEMO OF 07/17/1975
PLEASE PROVIDE NMSO A COPY.
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-4 - Laguna Plata Archaeological District (NSO)
SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes
Playa
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation
SENM-S-30 NSO - Potash Area
DEFER DUE TO POTASH RESOURCES

NM-200907-054 160.000 Acres
 T.0250S, R.0320E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 022 E2E2;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 16354
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-056 120.000 Acres
 T.0190S, R.0330E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 022 E2SE,SWSE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 67109
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation

NM-200907-057 120.000 Acres
 T.0190S, R.0330E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 023 SWNW,W2SW;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 58942
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-058 280.000 Acres
 T.0200S, R.0330E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 027 NE,N2SE,SWSE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 99044
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes
Playa
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens
SENM-S-23 Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-LN-2 Protection of the Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation

NM-200907-059 160.000 Acres
 T.0200S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 014 SE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 93218
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-060 160.000 Acres
 T.0200S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 023 NE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 93218, NMNM 98829
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-061 80.000 Acres
 T.0200S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 024 W2SW;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 14799
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens
SENM-S-1 Standard Potash Stipulation

NM-200907-062 40.000 Acres
 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 009 SESE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 15922
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-063 200.000 Acres
 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 012 W2SW;
 013 NENW,S2NW;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 15922
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-064 239.570 Acres
 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 018 LOTS 1;
 018 NE,NENW;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 17446
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-065 40.000 Acres

 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 024 NWNW;

Lea County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 77091

Formerly Lease No.

Stipulations:

NM-11-LN Special Cultural Resource

SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-128 240.000 Acres

T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM

Sec. 024 SENE,NESW,SE;

Lea County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 92783

Stipulations:

NM-11-LN Special Cultural Resource

SENM-S-20 Springs, Seeps and Tanks

Earthen Tank

SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-066 160.000 Acres

 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 025 E2E2;

Lea County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 92783

Formerly Lease No.

Stipulations:

NM-11-LN Special Cultural Resource

SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-129 160.000 Acres

T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM

Sec. 025 W2W2;

Lea County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 92783

Stipulations:

NM-11-LN Special Cultural Resource

SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-067 320.000 Acres

 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM

 Sec. 026 W2;

Lea County

Carlsbad FO

NMNM 92783

Formerly Lease No.

Stipulations:

NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice

SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-068 240.000 Acres
 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 027 SW,W2SE;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 93493, NMNM 93494
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-069 320.000 Acres
 T.0240S, R.0340E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 035 E2;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMNM 92783
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens

NM-200907-071 200.000 Acres
 T.0260S, R.0370E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 019 NE,NENW;
Lea County
Carlsbad FO
NMLC 030168-B
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice
SENM-S-22 Prairie Chickens
SENM-S-23 Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-LN-2 Protection of the Sand Dune Lizard
SENM-S-17 Slopes or Fragile Soils
Fragile Soils - Open dunes

NM-200907-072 160.000 Acres
 T.0160S, R.0380E, NM PM, NM
 Sec. 025 NE;
Lea County
Roswell FO
NMNM 96073
Formerly Lease No.
Stipulations:
SENM-S-19 Playas and Alkali Lakes
Playa
NMLN-11 - Special Cultural Resource Lease Notice